



**The Holy Prophet Zacharias, Father of the Venerable Forerunner
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates September 5**

According to the opinion of many Fathers of the Church, based on ancient tradition, this is the Zacharias whom, as our Lord said, the Jews slew between the temple and the altar (Matt. 23:35), first, because even after the Virgin Mary gave birth, he continued to refer to her as virgin and numbered her among the virgins (see Saint Basil's Homily on the Birth of Christ, PG 31:1468-9); second, because Zacharias' son John was not found during the slaughter of the innocents (Dec. 29), since the elderly Elizabeth had taken him while he was yet an infant, in an unnamed place somewhere in the desert, where, according to the Evangelist, "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke 1:80). When the child was not found, his father was slain by Herod's command (see St. Peter of Alexandria, Canon 13, in *The Rudder*).



Dismissal Hymn. Fourth Tone
Joseph was amazed

IN the vesture of a priest, according to the Law of God, * thou didst offer unto Him well-pleasing burnt offerings, * as it befitted a priest, O wise Zacharias. * Thou wast a shining light, a seer of mysteries, * bearing in thyself clearly the signs of grace; and in God's temple, O wise Prophet * of Christ God, thou wast slain with the sword. * Hence, with the Forerunner, make entreaty that our souls find salvation.

Kontakion. Third Tone
On this day the Virgin

ON this day the Prophet and * ven'erable priest of the Most High, * even Zacharias, who * begat the Forerunner, hath now * mixed for us the draught of virtue * and set the table * of his sacred mem'ry, nourishing all the faithful: * for this cause do we extol him* as a most godly * initiate of grace divine.



† THE FORERUNNER
RUBLEV